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What Roman Catholics Find When They Study Their Own Bible

(When we say “*their*” Bible, we have reference to the New American Bible published by Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, Washington D.C. with the encouragement of Archbishop Cicognani, Delegate to the United States.)

Roman Catholics are taught many things. They are often told about the contents of their Bible. If they would study it for themselves, they would find that their Bible encourages investigation and reading.

They would find — that they are admonished by Christ Himself to “*Search the Scriptures*” (John 5:39); that people are liable to make mistakes if they do not know the Scriptures (Matt. 22:29); that those are blessed who read the Scriptures (Revelation 1:3); and that “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching” (2 Tim. 3:16).

They would find — that *their Bible is the only rule of life* and that no man has right or authority to make any church laws contrary to it, nor dare they add to or take from it. “For I warn everyone who hears the prophetic words in this book: If anyone adds to them, God will add unto him the plagues described in this book, And if anyone takes away from the words in this prophetic book, God will take away his share in the of life and in the holy city described in this book.” (Rev. 22:18, 19). “Every word of God is tested; He is a shield to those who take refuge in Him. Add nothing to His words, lest He reprove you, and you be exposed as a deceiver.” (Prov. 30:5, 6).

They would find — that there is no Bible record of Peter being in Rome at any time, hence *no apostolic succession*. Paul never built upon another man's foundation, so that is evidence no apostle had been in Rome before him (To the Rom. 15:20). In writing to the Romans in A.D. 58 he salutes twenty-six people and never mentions Peter. Peter writing from A.D. 60-63 was then in Babylon (1 Pet. 5:13). Paul writing to Timothy in the last year of his life says, “Luke is the only one with me” (2 Tim. 4:9-12). Not a word about the apostle Peter. Finally, it is further proven that Peter was the apostle of the circumcision and worked among the Jews, while Paul was the apostle to the uncircumcision and worked among the Gentiles, therefore, it was the Lord's will that Paul, not Peter, go to Rome (To the Gal. 2:7-8; The Acts 23:11).

They would find — that Peter (also called Simon), who is claimed to be the first pope, was a *married man* (St. Mark 1:29-31).

They would find — that Zachary was a *married priest* (St. Luke 1:5, 13). Also that bishops were permitted to marry (1 Tim. 3:1-4) and that to forbid marriage is not sound doctrine (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

They would find — that their Bible *forbids* bowing down and the worship of images, pictures or relics (Exo. 20:3-5).

They would find — that *God only* can forgive sins (St. Mark 2:7).

They would find — that there is no mention made of purgatory or prayers for the dead, but that if men are ever fitted for heaven, they must be before death or not at all. “Just as it is appointed that human beings die once, and after this the judgment” (Heb. 9:27). Abraham could not help the dead (St. Luke 16:19-31). David knew it was no use praying for the dead (2 Sam. 12:16, 19, 22, 23).

They would find — that their Bible forbids them to call any man “*father*” as a religious title. “Call no one on earth your father; you have but one Father in heaven” (St. Matt. 23:9).

They would find — that the *Gospel is free* “without paying and without cost” (Isa. 55:1). No charges should be made for it (St. Matt. 10:7, 8).

They would find — that there is *only one Mediator between God and men*, and that this Mediator is neither Mary the mother of Jesus according to the flesh, nor some priest, but the *Lord Jesus Christ Himself*. “For there is one God. There is also one mediator between God and then human race, Christ Jesus, himself human” (1 Tim. 2:5, 6). “But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one” (1 St. John 2:1-3). “Then all of you and all the people of Israel should know that it was in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazorean whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead; in his name this man stands before you healed. There is no salvation through anyone else, nor is there any other name under heaven given to the human race by which we are to be saved.” (The Acts 4:10, 12).

They would find — that Christ is the *only way of salvation* and that no man-made system of religion can take the place of, or even assist *God's way* of saving sinners. “Jesus said to him, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one

comes to the Father except through me.” (St. John 14:6). “For our sake he made him to be sin who did not know sin, so that we might become the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Cor. 5:21).

They would find — that a person can be saved and know it in this life, that a person can realize and experience peace in his heart and have the *assurance of his sins forgiven*. These precious facts come to us only through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and His shed blood on the cross. “In him we have redemption by his blood, the forgiveness of transgressions, in accord with the riches of his grace” (Eph. 1:7). “Realizing that you were ransomed from your futile conduct, handed on by your ancestors, not with perishable things like silver or gold” (1 Pet. 1:18, 19). “He himself bore our sins in his body upon the cross, so that, free from sin, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.” (1 Pet. 2:24). (Also read Isa. 53:4-6; Gal. 3:13; St. John 6:37; 2 Cor. 5:21; Col. 1:20-22).

They would find — that when men and women die, they go to either heaven or hell; and that it is an eternal place, a state of conscious joy, or torment from which there is no deliverance (St. Luke 16:19-31; St. Matt. 25:41,46).

They would find — that the hope of the church is not earthly power and greatness, but a path of *suffering* as her rejected Lord suffered; and to wait for the return of the Lord Jesus Christ in a personal, visible manner as He once left this earth, and that He may come at any moment. “And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be.” (St. John 14:3). “They said, “Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you into heaven will return in the same way as you have seen him going into heaven.” (The Acts 1:11). “Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.” (St. Matt. 24:42, 44).

In conclusion — We would advise Catholics to read their Bibles and find the simple way of salvation as revealed therein. The Bible itself declares the way is so plain that “nor fools go astray on it.” (Isa. 35:8). We are more and more convinced that the need of the day is to search the unchanging Scriptures. Let us see if what bishops, priests, ministers and teachers tell us is the truth or not. In Apostolic days, this was done. “These Jews were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with all willingness and examined the scriptures daily to determine whether these things were so.” (The Acts 17:11). They who do not preach and teach the Gospel as it is found in the Scriptures are under the curse of God and should not be received into the house. “But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach (to you) a gospel other than the one that we preached to you, let that one be accursed! As we have said before, and now I say again, if anyone preaches to you a gospel other than the one that you received, let that one be accursed!” (Gal. 1:8, 9). “If anyone comes to you and does not bring this doctrine, do not receive him in your house or even greet him; for whoever greets him shares in his evil works.” (2 John 10-11).